



MPC Headlines

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MPC Board Members
Shedrick Coleman, Chairman
Adam Ragsdale, Vice-Chair
Lacy Manigault, Treasurer
Jon Pannell, Secretary
Susan Myers
Jon Todd
Russ Abolt
Ellis Cook
Michael Brown
Ben Farmer
Joseph Welch
Stephen Lufburrow
Timothy Mackey
Tanya Milton

Thomas L. Thomson,
Executive Director
Contributors:
Jason Lee, Editor
Charlotte Moore
Ellen Harris
Jackie Jackson Teel
Bethany Jewell
Jane Love
Amanda Bunce
Michael Adams
David Ramsey, Graphics

Incoming and Exiting Officers of the MPC Board

Thomas Thomson,
P.E., AICP, Executive Director
thomsont@thempc.org

The Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission is an integral part of the process by which major zoning and development decisions are made. As volunteers, the members of the Planning Commission strive to provide valued services and a transparent decision-making processes to the community.

The Planning Commission and staff endeavor to maintain a high level of objective technical, planning, and administrative skills that work for the benefit our community. The members of the Planning Commission demonstrate the value and success of planning thru good decisions that benefit all interests.

That is why what the members bring to the dais is so important to the community. I am pleased to share with you several recent changes to the Planning Commission that represent the continued dedication of our volunteer members.

In September, W. Shedrick Coleman was elected Chairman of the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission. Mr. Coleman, a local architect, was appointed to the Planning Commission by the Chatham County Commissioners in 2006. He previously served as Vice Chairman and Secretary.



Chairman Coleman had this to say

regarding his chairmanship:

“As Chairman my goal is to strengthen the Commissions' role as a non-partisan forum for the discussion of all matters under it's charge. In doing that, I desire that both petitioners and the public at large feel confident that their voices will be heard and fairly considered in the decisions rendered. Additionally, I hope to serve as a positive face to promote the value the MPC provides to the community as the one organization that can serve as the unifying link to the planning and transportation needs of our region.”

J. Adam Ragsdale was elected Vice-Chairman. Mr. Ragsdale, appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen to the Planning Commission in 2007, is a landscape architect with Wolverton & Associates.



Jon Pannell was elected Secretary. Mr. Pannell, an attorney with Gray and Pannell, was appointed to the Planning Commission by the Mayor and Alderman in 2009.



Lacy Manigault was elected Treasurer. Mr. Manigault, appointed to the Planning Commission by the Mayor and Alderman in 2003, previously held the office of Secretary.



Officers were sworn in during the October 20, 2009 meeting of the Planning Commission by The

Honorable James F. Bass Jr.

The Planning Commission and staff thank our outgoing officers for their service over the last two years: Jon Todd served as chairman, Shedrick Coleman as vice-chair, Susan Myers as Treasurer and Adam Ragsdale as Secretary.

The one other change was the appointment of a new member, Joseph T. Welch who was appointed to the MPC Board by the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County to replace David Hoover. Welch is an area businessman involved in irrigation and insurance underwriting.



David Hoover was a valued member of the Planning Commission and dedicated to serve our community. The Planning Commission and staff thank him for his service. Mr. Hoover was appointed to the MPC Board on April 27, 2007.

The Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission Board consists of 14 members. Six members are appointed by County Commission, six members are appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen; the City Manager and the County Manager serve as ex officio members of the Board. Generally, appointed members serve two- three year terms. All members serve without compensation.

GIS DAY 2009



*Jason Lee
GIS Analyst*

GIS is an integral part of business and government in Chatham County and Coastal Georgia.

For example, on August 27, SAGIS, CEMA, Chatham County GIS, and all the Fire Departments in Chatham County came together to iron out exact boundaries for fire service. Although most areas were agreed upon, areas of uncertainty became

obvious when viewed through a highly accurate GIS map. These discrepancies are being resolved, and will be reflected in a new GIS map that will be the first truly precise and comprehensive fire district map. The advantages of this clarification for both CEMA and the individual fire departments are: reduced response time, decreased areas of double coverage (where two fire departments respond to the same call), and better cooperation during a mutual aid situation such as a disaster.

To acknowledge everyday occurrences such as this, and thus highlight the importance of GIS to the

Savannah area, SAGIS and the GIS community of Southeast Georgia would like to announce GIS Day Savannah 2009, to be held at the 165th Airlift Wing at the Savannah Hilton Head International Airport on November 18. Eighth grade students from Chatham County schools (both public and private) have been invited to both attend and participate. The general public, as always, is invited to attend the afternoon portion beginning at 1:30 p.m. and lasting until 3:00 p.m. Please come and learn what GIS in Savannah is all about! For more information go to <http://gisdaysavannah.org/>



HAPPY RETIREMENT, BARBARA AND MARILYN!

The MPC would like to wish Barbara Timbers and Marilyn Gignilliat congratulations on their recent retirements, and thank them for their years of service.



Marilyn started with the MPC in 1998, and after 11 years. She and her husband Larry look forward to travel and gardening. We will miss her dearly, and hope we can survive without her!



Barbara has been with the MPC for 28 years! For the past 16 years she has served as the director of Information Services and Mapping. Barbara will be sorely missed; the MPC will not be the same without her!

Best Wishes!!!!

Savannah's Squares Receive National Recognition



*Charlotte Moore
Director of Special Projects*

As part of National Community Planning month in October, the American Planning Association (APA) named Savannah's squares as one of 10 Great Public Spaces in America for 2009. According to the APA website, the Great Places in America program "celebrates places of



Award Ceremony

exemplary character, quality, and planning. Places are selected annually and represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement, and a vision for tomorrow." The categories of Great Places include Neighborhoods,

Streets and Public Spaces. In 2007, Bull Street (from City Hall to Forsyth Park) was designated as a Great Public Street.

APA noted that the squares reflect a commitment to planning by continuing and expanding upon the original plan (Oglethorpe Plan) for Savannah. The first four squares were established in 1733; the last square, Whitefield Square, was developed in 1856. In addition to serving as an iconic symbol of Savannah, the squares provide a multitude of functions including: green space, calming vehicular traffic, showcasing public art and monuments and a place for social interaction or quiet reflection. Of the 24 squares established, 21 are functional. Two squares, Elbert and Liberty, were demolished in 1935 to allow for the construction of US Highway 17. Ellis Square is undergoing redevelopment.

The nomination was submitted by Chatham County Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission with the assistance of the Savannah Development and Renewal Authority and the City of Savannah Department of Film and Tourism.

Tom Thomson, MPC Executive Director presented Mayor Otis Johnson with the award in Ellis Square, which is one of the original squares platted by General James Edward Oglethorpe, founder of the Colony of Georgia. Ellis Square is in the process of being redeveloped as a public multi-use square. It had served as the site of four public markets then a public parking garage for more than 50 years. Completion is targeted for the end of 2009.

To review all of the 2009 Great Places in America winners, visit <http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/>.

Georgia Department of Transportation Creates

Conservation Covenant



GDOT Parcel (labeled)

*Joanna Bounds
Resource Protection
Planner*

On September 17, 2009, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) signed and executed a restrictive covenant for a 169.46 acre property

along the Ogeechee River in order to conserve the area's natural resources in perpetuity. The property, currently used by the GDOT as a wetland mitigation bank, lies immediately adjacent to the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Society Museum property. The restrictive covenant created protects the property's natural resources by prohibit-

ing development, clearing, dredging, the disposal of waste, or any other action that might compromise the integrity of the environment or the quality of the water.

The Chatham County Commission, in 2008, created the Chatham County Resource Protection Commission to facilitate protection of our remaining important natural areas.

The creation of this covenant was supported by the efforts of Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield, the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Chatham County Resource Protection Commission, and the GDOT. Together, these organizations have ensured the perpetual protection of over

130 acres of bottomland hardwood forest (wetlands) and 35 acres of uplands, including a unique sand ridge home to the Federally Threatened Gopher Tortoise.

The protection of this GDOT parcel is part of an on-going initiative to preserve the Lower Ogeechee River Conservation Corridor, a 13,500 acre vegetated tract buffering the Ogeechee. Over 10 agencies and organizations have joined together to achieve this goal and with the addition of the 169 acres protected by the GDOT, this partnership has already preserved over 1,500 acres.

For more information, please call Joanna Bounds at 912-651-1467.



Stormwater Sampling

*Jackie Jackson Teel
Natural Resources Administrator*

Since 1992 the Natural Resources Planning section of the Comprehensive Planning Department oversees specific stormwater program management facets for the municipalities within Chatham County. This program is jointly funded by Unincorporated Chatham



County in addition to the Town of Thunderbolt, and the Cities of Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, and Tybee Island. Staff is responsible for providing assistance to meet the conditions of their stormwater permits and stormwater management

programs approved by the State of Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD).

Among various other tasks associated with this program is the requirement for routine annual monitoring of a number of the Chatham County's waterways. MPC's Natural Resources staff monitors stormwater pollutants through water sampling performed in both dry and wet, or rainy, weather conditions to include an analysis for stormwater pollutants. The data is then evaluated to determine if there is any illegal or hard to detect discharge activity taking place or if stormwater program improvements are needed to adequately prevent stormwater pollution.

The illicit discharge or dry weather monitoring sites sampled were selected a number of years ago based on geographic area and accessibility. Forty sites were selected throughout all of Chatham County. The dry weather monitoring program tests for the following

parameters: water temperature, pH, turbidity, detergents/surfactants, fecal coliform, total chlorine, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and ammonia.

Sampling during the wet, rainy weather events require a different set of parameters. The list of parameters that are analyzed at each of the wet weather sampling locations included Biological Oxygen Demand, Total Suspended Solids, nutrients, metals, oil and grease, fecal coliform, and organic compounds.

If samples tested during either of these two scenarios show unusual spikes, non-compliance and/or violation of the permit, then additional sampling and site inspections of potential violators and legal action as defined in the municipality's Storm Water Ordinance would be initiated to identify and correct the cause of the problem. In addition, the results of both the wet weather and dry weather sampling events are reviewed and monitored by the Georgia EPD on an annual basis.

VERSION XIII of the revised **Historic District ordinance** (Section 8-3030) was approved by the MPC on October 20th! As a condition of the approval, staff will be consulting with the City Attorney's office to ensure that both Visual Compatibility and Design Standards are equally considered in the review process. We anticipate that the draft will be before City Council for the Public Hearing and first reading in November 17, 2009.

*Sarah P. Ward, LEED AP
Preservation Planner*

MPC Duties: Boards Served

Amanda Bunce, Development Services Planner
Ellen Harris, Preservation Planner

As an organization that wears many hats, the MPC is quite used to both multi-tasking and working for multiple bosses. The MPC is constantly busy on behalf of the citizens of Chatham County and Savannah in one duty or another, ensuring that our community stays healthy and vibrant. From staffing the multiple boards below to serving them in all aspects to which they are charged, our abbreviated responsibility list over the next five pages shows just how busy:

Metropolitan Planning Commission

Reviews and acts on:

- Site Plans
- Major Subdivisions
- Master Plans
- Wireless Telecommunication Facility applications
- New Construction and Demolitions in the Victorian District
- Demolition in Mid-City and Cuyler-Brownville (if requested)
- Appeals of staff decisions

Reviews and makes recommendation to Governing Bodies on:

- Zoning Map Amendments
- Zoning Text Amendments
- Special Use Approvals for certain zoning districts
- Comprehensive Plan amendments

City and County Zoning Boards of Appeals

Reviews and acts on:

- Variance requests
- Use approval requests
- Remote parking approval
- Appeals of decisions by the Zoning Administrator, MPC and the Historic Board of Review

Historic Board of Review

- Issues Certificates of Appropriateness within the Savannah Historic District
- Appeals of Staff decisions
- Recommendations to ZBA on variances

SAGIS Board

- Manages and supports GIS in Chatham County
- Determines data acquisition needs
- Determines data priorities and standards
- Develops application priorities and standards
- Promotes SAGIS use throughout the community

Historic Site and Monument Commission

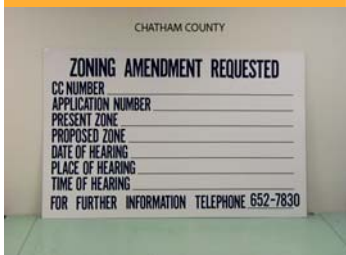
- Reviews applications on markers, monuments and public art on private property in local historic districts within Savannah (if visible from the public right-of-way)
- Makes recommendations to City Council regarding markers, monuments and public art on public property within the City of Savannah

Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission

- Issues Certificates of Appropriateness for all local historic districts and properties in unincorporated Chatham County
- Makes recommendations on designations of local historic districts and properties in unincorporated Chatham County to the County Commission



MPC Board meeting



MPC Duties: Boards Served



Chatham County Resource Protection Commission

- Identifies, evaluates and ranks sensitive ecological and historic sites in Chatham County
- Recommends sites for protection to County Commission
- Coordinates preservation activities among various agencies and groups

Coastal Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO)

CORE MPO Board

- Is designated by agreements between the governor and local units of government to carry out a 3-C (continuing, cooperative and comprehensive) metropolitan transportation planning process for the urbanized area
- Consists of local elected officials, modal representatives and appropriate state transportation officials.
- Formulates transportation-related policies in support of the overall goals and objectives for the County:
- Carries out the metropolitan transportation planning process in coordination with the statewide transportation planning process
- Prepares the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan
- Develops and uses a documented participation Plan to provide reasonable opportunities for citizens affected public agencies, modal representatives, users of public transportation, walkways, bikeways, the disabled and other interested parties to be involved in the transportation planning process.
- Develops transportation planning studies and projects.
- Develops a Congestion Management Process
- Develops and is responsible for the content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Develops the Transportation Improvement Program
- Provides the liaison between the planning process and the appropriate governmental units.
- Designates the membership and operations of the other study Committees.
- Receives assistance from the Technical Coordinating Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, and Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation.

CORE MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

- Assists in preparing the Unified Planning Work Program, reviews all studies related to transportation within the CORE MPO planning area, and makes recommendations to the CORE MPO Board and other agencies upon the work program and studies.
- Reviews the status of activities necessary to keep the MPO program current and reports to the CORE MPO Board regarding such reviews and makes the reviews on the basis of technical sufficiency, accuracy, and completeness of such studies, plans, and programs.

CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Provide a forum to obtain public views on transportation issues and problems.
- Advise the CORE MPO Board on matters of public opinion concerning MPO study findings and recommendations.
- Inform the CORE MPO Board of the community's perspective while providing information to the community about transportation policies and issues.

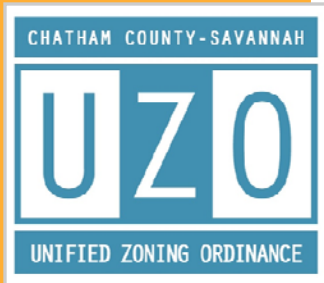
CORE MPO Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT)

- Serves as the forum for cooperative decision-making with regard to accessible transportation related issues in Chatham County.
- Advises the CORE MPO Board on accessible transportation related policies.
- Ensures that the transportation planning process is current and responsive to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations
- Advise the Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) on accessible transportation related issues by reviewing and advising CAT on public transportation programs and studies.
- Advise the Savannah-Chatham Council on Disability Issues (SCCDI) on accessible transportation related issues.

MPC Staff Duties

Amanda Bunce, Development Services Planner

Ellen Harris, Preservation Planner



Historic Preservation workshop

Development Services:

- Reviews and approves Site Plans not requiring MPC approval and Minor Subdivisions
- Reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission on Site Plans, Major Subdivisions, Map & Text Amendments, Special Use Approvals and Wireless Telecommunication Facility applications
- Serves as Secretary to the Zoning Boards of Appeals and makes recommendations to those boards
- Assigns addresses for new lots and changes addresses on existing lots
- Maintains street name and address range database for E-911 system

Special Projects:

- Drafting of the Unified Zoning Ordinance
- Other special planning projects as assigned

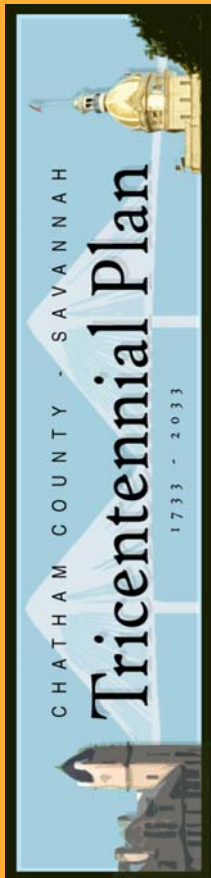
Historic Preservation:

- Issues Certificates of Appropriateness for minor changes in the Savannah Historic District, and local historic districts and properties in unincorporated Chatham County
- Maintains Certified Local Government status for the City of Savannah and Chatham County
- Issues Certificates of Appropriateness for the Victorian District, Mid City, and Cuyler-Brownville
- Maintains and updates inventories and surveys of historic resources through survey cards, maps, etc.
- Performs Section 106 Reviews through a Programmatic Agreement with the SHPO
- Provides education and outreach to communities about historic resources through serving on panels, giving tours, lecturing, and organizing workshops

Transportation:

- Develops and updates transportation plans
- Staffs the CORE Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Reviews traffic impact studies
- Reviews short and long range transit studies in support of the CORE MPO programs and the Chatham Area Transit system
- Updates the Traffic Volume Map
- Provides staff support to the CORE MPO Board and advisory committees
- Prepares necessary plans and studies to maintain our region's eligibility for federal and state funds.
- Develops and updates the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Bicycle/Non-motorized Transportation Plan
- Develops and updates Participation Plan (PP) and conduct the public involvement process associated with MPO plans, programs and studies
- Reviews short and long range transit studies in support of the CORE MPO programs and the Chatham Area Transit system
- Reviews traffic impact studies of all major development proposals and reports findings and recommendations to the MPC Board.
- Reviews and comments on all Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) in the region.
- Attends MPO meetings, and coordinates with our neighboring MPO in Hinesville.
- Participates in appropriate professional associations such as the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and the Georgia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (GAMPO).

MPC Staff Duties



Transportation (continued):

- Attend State Transportation Board Meetings and other meetings with key GDOT, SRTA, FHWA and FTA staff as needed.
- Assists the City and County with special studies such as Project DeRenne and provides technical support as needed.
- Develops and maintains the travel demand model in cooperation with GDOT. Conducts operations and testing with the model as needed.
- Evaluates and/or prepares original transportation simulation models in support of current studies or land use proposals.
- Prepares functional design drawings and visualizations of proposed transportation improvements
- Develops processes to ensure appropriate context sensitive design and complete streets approaches are incorporated into future transportation projects.
- Attends preconstruction and concept meetings hosted by GDOT and informs the process on local concerns and issues.
- Administers the Coastal Commuters program to encourage carpooling and the use of alternative modes
- Conducts special and strategic transportation studies such as the Transit Vision Plan, the I-16 Flyover Removal Study, the SR 204 Corridor Study, the SR 21 Corridor Study and the US 80 Bridge Study.
- Coordinates with federal, state and local governments and entities, and reviews and comments on regionally significant land use and transportation issues, plans and programs.

Information Services & Mapping:

- Maintains historic map files
- Prepares graphics for staff reports and for the public
- Maintains and verifies all address for the Master Address Database
- Maintains the zoning, municipal, and annexations layers for unincorporated Chatham County and the City of Savannah
- Provides assistance to the public for map inquiries and archived historic maps and images
- Census Map yearly revisions

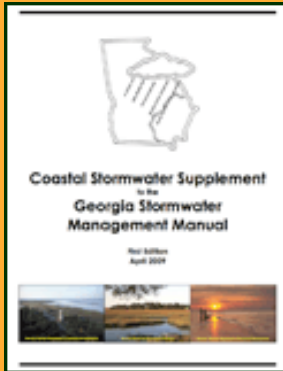
Comprehensive Planning:

- Coordinates with Census Bureau Programs (LUCA, BAS, PSAP)
- Creates population and employment projections for transportation modeling
- Conducts neighborhood planning and zoning studies
- Updates Comprehensive Plan every five years
- Implements Short Term Work Program in Comprehensive Plan (ongoing process)
- Ensures compliance with State Planning Laws

Natural Resources:

- NPDES/Stormwater Management Program (unincorporated Chatham County, Thunderbolt, Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, and Tybee Island)
- Provides assistance to meet the conditions of each jurisdiction's stormwater permits and the requirements of the stormwater management program approved by the State of Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD).
- Annual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater report submittal to the GA EPD

MPC Staff Duties



- Contract and project management for the Coastal Stormwater Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.
- Monitoring stormwater pollutants through water sampling and data analysis.
- Public education and outreach to comply with the County's NPDES permit including: billboard informational postings; newspaper articles; public speaking engagements to area community groups, school classes and community-wide events; Sand Gnats Community Nights, Adopt-a-Stream program, Rivers Alive clean up events, Best Management Practices Educational Seminars; storm drain marking program and oversight of the Community Partners for Clean Water program for the municipalities' business communities.

Water Conservation/Water Resources Planning & Outreach programs

- Drafts and updates the Chatham County Water Conservation and Efficiency Plan for submittal to the GA EPD.
- Water Conservation and Efficiency Plan progress reports to the GA EPD to maintain compliance with the County's drinking water and groundwater withdrawal permits.
- Public education and outreach including: county-wide water festivals, billboard informational postings; newspaper articles; public speaking engagements to area community groups, school classes and community-wide events; and TV commercials.
- Maintains the website www.mpcnaturalresources.org. Water conservation guidance materials for the local community, commercial facilities, industry and residents are also available in Spanish on this website.

SAGIS:

- Maintains and ensures current inter-departmental access to spatial datasets for Chatham County/Savannah (such as up-to-date addressing information to Emergency Services)
- Facilitates cooperation and data sharing among all GIS departments in Chatham County/Savannah
- Executes acquisition of county-wide datasets such as imagery and elevation data
- Maintains and updates crucial county-wide map layers such as Roads
- Creates and publishes county-wide data standards and best practices
- GIS training, technical support, public coordination and outreach
- Provide public access to government data through www.sagis.org
- Creates custom geospatial solutions, applications and web applications, and models
- Supports integration of GIS into other applications and processes

Administration:

- Provides general secretarial duties to support each board and commission and staff
- Provides customer service to the public
- Building management

Systems and Finance:

Provides financial services, accounting, reporting and information technology support for all boards and staff under the MPC umbrella, including:

- Contracting and contract administration
- Physical asset management
- Information Technology asset management
- Custom programming and reporting
- Maintenance on 8 all MPC related websites:
 - www.thempc.org
 - www.savannahdrc.org
 - www.westbay-hudsonhill.info
 - www.gisdaysavannah.org
 - www.unifiedzoning.org
 - www.costalcommuters.org
 - www.chathamenvironmentalforum.org
 - www.mpcnaturalresources.org
- Information security and safeguards



MPC Meeting